

Prabuddha Bharata

वृत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



शान्त्यं वराणिबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

XV.—Continued.

[Subjects :—*The qualities of men and women in America.—The jealous persecution of bigoted Christians.—Nothing great is accomplished in this world by low cunning.—Reliance on God.—A few words about Nag Mahasaya.*]

The topic of his American experiences came up. Swamiji said, "In that country the women are more learned than men. They are all well versed in science and philosophy and that is why they could appreciate and honour me so much. The men are grinding all day at their work with very little leisure to themselves whereas the women by teaching and studying at the schools and colleges have become highly learned. Whichever side you turn your eyes in America you see the power and influence of women."

Disciple.— Well, Sir, did not the bigoted Christians stand in opposition to you ?

Swamiji.— Yes, they did. When people began to honour me, then the Pātris

were after me. They spread many slanders about me by publishing them in the newspapers. Some asked me to contradict these slanders in the papers. But I never took the slightest notice of them. It is my firm conviction that no great work is accomplished in this world, by mere low cunning of worldliness ; so without paying any heed to these vile slanders, I used to work steadily at my mission. The upshot I used to find, many times, was that my slanderers feeling repentant afterwards would surrender to me and offer apologies by themselves contradicting the slanders in the papers. Sometimes it so happened that learning that I had been invited to a certain house, somebody repeated those slanders to my host ;

hearing which he left home locking his door. When I went there to keep the invitation I found it was all silence and nobody was there. Again a few days afterwards, they themselves learning the truth, would feel sorry for their previous conduct and come and accept my discipleship. The fact is, my son, this whole world is full of mean ways of worldliness. Men of real moral courage and discrimination, are they outwitted and deceived by these ways of worldliness? Let the world say what it chooses, I shall tread the path of duty—know this is to be the action of a *Veera*, a hero. Otherwise if one has to attend day and night to what this man says or the other writes no great work is achieved in this world. Do you know this Sanskrit sloka: "Let those who are versed in the ethical codes praise or let them blame, let *Lakshmi*, the goddess of Fortune come or let Her go wherever She wisheth, let death overtake him to-day or after a century, the wise never swerve their steps from the path of rectitude." Let people praise you or blame you, let Fortune smile upon you or frown, let your body fall to-day or after a *Yuga*, see that you do not fall from the path of Truth. How much of tempests and waves one has to weather, before one

reaches the haven of Peace. The greater a man has become, the fiercer ordeal he has to pass through. Their lives have been tested true by the touchstone of practical life and only then they have been acknowledged great by the world. Those who are faint-hearted and cowardly sink the barks near the shore frightened by the raging of waves on the sea. He who is a *Mahaveera*, a Hero, does he ever cast a glance at these? Let come whatever will, I must attain my ideal first—this is *Purushakāra*, manly endeavour; without such manliness of endeavour a hundred of Divine helps will little avail to banish your inertia.

Disciple—. Is, then, reliance on Divinity a sign of weakness?

Swamiji.— In the Shastras real self-surrender and reliance on God has been indicated as the highest or culmination of human destiny. But in your country now-a-days the way people say, 'Daiva, Daiva,' reliance on Divine dispensation, is a sign of death, the outcome of great cowardliness; conjuring up a monstrous God and to endeavour to saddle him with all your faults and shortcomings. Have you heard the story Sri Ramakrishna used to tell about "the sin of killing a cow"?* In

* There was a gardener who had laid out a beautiful plot of land with flower-beds and fruit trees, and with beautiful paths winding about within the plot. The gardener was very proud of his garden and took great care and pains to improve and embellish it. Once a cow stealthily entered the enclosure and began to damage and destroy the fruits and trees. Seeing this, the gardener blinded with rage chased it and belaboured it so mercilessly that the cow fell down dead. Seeing the iniquity of his conduct blinded by rage, he was very much disturbed in mind and so when the sin of killing the cow began to enter his mind and find lodgment therein he had recourse to spiritual sophistry and turned it away by saying to himself, 'well, the hand with which I have killed the cow, is but an instrument, its presiding deity is the God Indra, so Indra has really killed the cow I am but the instrument.' When the sin, therefore approached Indra and prepared to attack him, he realised the sophistry of the gardener by which he wanted to pass the sin on to him. In order to teach him a lesson, Indra disguised himself under the form of a Brāhman visitor and entered the garden, where the gardener was working. Seeing him the gardener took him round the place and showed him with pride and joy the beautiful spots and trees and plants of his garden,

the end the gardener had to suffer for the sin of killing the cow. Now-a-days everybody says: "I am acting as I am being ordained by the Lord" and thus throws the burden of both his sins and virtues on the Lord. As if he is himself like the lotus-leaf in the water (untouched by it). If everybody can practically and truly live always in this mood, then he is a Free Soul. But what really happens is, that of the "good" I am the enjoyer, for the "bad" you, God, is responsible—praise be to your divine reliance!! Without the attainment of the fullness of knowledge (Jnana) or Divine Love, such a state of absolute reliance on the Lord does not come. He who is truly and sincerely reliant on the Lord goes beyond all idea of the duality of good and bad—the brightest example of the attainment of this state among us, at the present time, is Nag Mahasaya.

Then the conversation drifted to the subject of Nag Mahasaya and Swamiji began to talk about him. Swamiji said—"Such a devoted bhakta, one does not find a second,—oh, when shall I see him again."

Disciple.— He will soon come to Calcutta to meet you, so our mother (Nag Mahasaya's wife) has written to me.

Swamiji.— Sri Ramakrishna used to compare him to king Janaka. A man with such control over all the senses, what to speak of meeting with a second, one

never hears of. You must associate with him as much as you can. He is one of Sri Ramakrishna's nearest disciples.

Disciple.— Many in our part of the country call him a madcap. But I have known him to be a Mahapurusha (great soul) since the first day of my meeting him. He loves me very much and I have his fervent blessings.

Swamiji.— You have attained the company of such a Mahapurusha, what more have you to fear about? As an effect of many lives of *tapasya* (austerities) one is blessed with the company of such a Mahapurusha. How does he live in his home?

Disciple.— Sir, there is not much of worldly stir and activity about him. He is always busy in serving the guests who come to his house. Beyond the few rupees the Pal Babus give him he has no other means of subsistence; but his expenses are on a scale equivalent to what one finds in a rich man's household. But he does not spend a fraction of a pice for his own enjoyment, all that expense is for the service of others. Service—service of others—this seems to be the great mission of his life. It sometimes strikes me that perceiving the Atman in all creatures he is busily engrossed in serving the whole world with sameness of vision, without any distinction. In the service of others, he is not conscious even of his body as a body—as if unconscious of

remarking, "I have laid out this bed, sir, I have planted the other trees." In the course of their round they came upon the place where they found the cow lying dead. Indra shuddered, seeing that, and exclaimed, "What is this! who has committed this heinous sin of killing a cow?" The gardener was dumbfounded and was fumbling for some answer when Indra seeing his embarrassment left his disguise and appearing before him in his own form said, "You hypocrite, the beautiful garden, the trees, plants and the beautiful paths you have planted and laid out, but the sin of killing the cow has been committed by me, according to you. You are not the doer thereof. Humbug! can you escape the effects of your action by sophistry?" Saying this, Indra disappeared. Then the sin came and attacked the mind of the gardener.

it,—such a tireless activity! Really I doubt sometimes if he has any consciousness of the body. What you, Sir, call the super-conscious state of the mind, perhaps, I suppose, he always lives on that plane.

Swamiji.— Why should not that be?

He was a great object of love of Sri Ramakrishna. In your country of East Bengal, one of Sri Ramakrishna's divine companions has been born in the person of Nag Mahasaya. By his radiance, Eastern Bengal has become effulgent.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

OF all systems of religion and philosophy the Vedanta is the one *par-excellence* which gives man complete possession of himself. It interposes nothing—neither God, man or angel between himself and the fulfilment of his destiny, and boldly declares that as the past has been his creation he must take the future also in his own hands. The solution of the misery, the pain and pleasure, of good and bad is thus based on adamantine foundations, namely, on himself and on his exertions which are under his control. The common human tendency is never to fasten the blame on oneself, but to seek to shirk it upon somebody else, or failing that to conjure up a hideous caricature of a Fate and make him responsible. By such futile attempts man never succeeds in extricating himself from the danger and difficulties of his situation, but pining or fretting in impotent anguish and rage he only ends by taking himself into deeper depths of bondage and looking where the remedy does not lie he goes round and round a labyrinth of ignorance.

if there are defects in the external which hurts you if you go to seek for objective remedies you may go on for centuries, you will never succeed in squaring the external to yourself completely. The external evil only will change form and shape and appear under new guises; you may attack the evil in one body, and before you are aware, it has left it and appeared under another manifestation, while you are perhaps only attacking the carcass. So long as the root-cause in the subject is not removed, no amount of external manipulation will avail. It will be trying to move the boat with oars while the anchor has been cast.

So social progress, or national progress, considered comprehensively has not much meaning. It is only a case of going round and round a circle, chasing the evil from place to place. Of course there is much even in this chasing, for it gives us the necessary gymnastics and the necessary experiences which we need for awakening to the Reality. Beyond that, as an exercise or gymnastics of the mind, it has not much objective value. Many of the plans for social reconstruction or for bringing about a better order of things which obtain now find their whole force in the skilfulness of external manipulation of conditions. If war or any social evil

The Vedanta takes him by the hand and shows him where to look for rectification. It says you have no control of the external because the external as such does not exist. The appearance of the external owes its existence to yourself, and

on a great scale is to be weeded out, the real remedy will be found not so much in disarming, or dispowering any military caste which is in the ascendancy, as in supplying the necessary amount of moral or ethical force which will serve as a powerful restraining or ethical factor. The fact that it has been possible to deluge the world with a tide of barbaric force, argues the ascendancy and power of the military caste as much as the bankruptcy of moral and ethical force which has not acted as a deterrent influence.

The Vedanta therefore places the whole emphasis on the subjective side of man. It first clears the ground by showing that the external world *per se*, does not exist, it is wholly conditioned, coloured by your own self. You yourself create the phantoms of worldly realities and then prostrate before them in fear and trembling. It is as the Vedantic simile goes, like mistaking your own hand for a snake in the dark and then trying to run away from it in fright. Nothing has power to affect the Infinite Soul or Atman of man until he himself forgets his own glory and his own independence and surrenders his birthright of independence to the creatures of his own phantasy. It is the vibration of his own mind, the playing and working of his own imagination and phantasy which creates scene after scene before him by which he is overpowered and obsessed by turns.

So Vedanta says no amount of external remedies and measures of reform will avail to cure the ills of life or the defects of civilisation. It will be as futile as trying to control the shadows while the substance is moving. This idea of the futility of objective remedies is well ex-

pressed in the Upanishads in the Yajna-
valkya—Matreyi Sambad in the following words: "Now, when the drum is being beaten, the external sounds are incapable of being controlled but the sound is controlled when the drum or the beater of the drum is seized." "Just as when the conch is blown, the external sound is incapable of being controlled, but the sound is controlled when the conch or the blower is seized." "Just as the sound of a lute being played, the sound is incapable of being controlled, but the sound is controlled if the lute or the player is seized."

Therefore the remedy is to make the subject strong, not strong in aggressive assertion, strong in 'redemptive self-sacrifice.' How to make the subject strong? "By attuning it to the Infinite"—as Swami Vivekananda says. Standing on the naked glory of the Atman of man, the birthless, the deathless, the Immortal, before whose Glory the whole Universe with its myriads of systems are but a drop in the Ocean of Existence, established in Its transcendent glory, all the sufferings and tribulations may come, but they will dash fruitlessly against this rock-foundation. The strength which seeks to prove itself by triumphing over and putting down others, only stultifies itself. The strength which is born of the consciousness of the Self of Man is placed far above the flimsy confidence which arises out of crossing swords with rival opponents and overpowering them. It is more positive, its fountain is within, its flow is perennial, and is not dependent on external circumstances. It is the shining forth of the native power of the soul and not the consciousness of strength arising out of a clash of powers. It does not seek to protect itself by an ever-ready

preparedness to meet and overthrow opponents, but it is sufficiently self-conscious and established in its own poise as not to feel the necessity of reacting to every outside stimuli. It is established in its own strength and glory, it looks with unconcern upon all the passing trivialities of life, however big they may appear to ordinary individuals. There is no place for revenge or retaliation in its own category, but the consciousness of its own inherent strength makes it overlook all the waves of Maya that may bent upon its rock-foundation. Even if it resists evil, it is not propelled by passion or animus, it is only for setting right a violated moral law for the good of

the world without any venom or bitterness behind it, all the while retaining its own calmness and poise undisturbed.

Suffering, then, in the sense of denying all outside evil by the consciousness of inherent strength based on the Self is thus a higher manifestation of soul-force, than all out-going reaction to evil. Every out-going action implies a susceptibility to external influences, which leads us to assume weakness or defect in the subject, which necessitates an ever-ready, preparedness to fight all foes, internal or external, disbalancing the subject still further.

THE IMMANENT BRAHMAN.

VERY often it is mistakingly supposed that the Vedanta philosophy is looking beyond the present life of man and centres the whole hope and aspiration of man in the realisation and attainment of a future state of existence. This supposition is thoroughly based on a misconception which we shall attempt to prove in this article. Not only does it not look forward to a future state of existence as the culmination of human destiny, but the aspirant in Vedanta renounces from the start all hopes and fears, all lives here and hereafter, all heavens and hells as being too low and vulgar for human endeavour and insists on seeing the Truth face to face and being one with it even now in this life without waiting for a future existence.

What then becomes of the Vedantic statement that the whole world is a dream, an unreality, a Maya? In what sense are we then to understand it? If the whole world is

a fiction of Maya, an unsubstantial shadow, then certainly the *summum bonum*, according to Vedanta must be to renounce and fly away from it, and the attainment of human destiny will be found in a state of existence other than this. But it is not in that sense that Vedanta means to deny this our present world of the senses. The forms and objects of our sensible world are not absolutely unreal, but are mistaken readings of an underlying Truth. Ordinarily ignorance assumes that every object has a separate and independent reality which subsists apart from everything else and will last even if everything else is annihilated; this overlooks the patent fact of the inter-relatedness and dependence of all objects around us. This constitutes the matrix of ignorance, each object, being taken as a separate individuality, we enter into diverse relations with one another and with the objects, all based on the false standpoint of distinct and

separate units. As this relation becomes complicated with the mingling of different *upadhis* (limiting adjuncts) the underlying Truth and Unity is forgotten and we wholly manufacture a fictitious world of egoism, with separate interests, separate desires.

To know that nothing has a separate name or form apart from the Brahman is knowledge. Brahman is the one substance and objects are styled differently, because they are regarded as otherwise through ignorance. Just as in the well-known example in Vedanta a rope is regarded as a snake, different from the rope, just as the earthen vessel is regarded as a distinct object separate from the underlying clay from which it is formed and styled as a pot or jar, but when the real nature of the clay is known the idea of pots and jars as separate existences vanishes, so when the underlying Brahman is perceived, all the iron-bound distinctions of diverse objects of our sensible world melt into the conception of a homogeneous whole.

When the underlying unity is perceived, all the motions and actions of normal human life will continue, only they will be placed on rational foundations. Everything in this relative world of becoming will remain, and will stand explained in the light of the highest generalisation, the Brahman, the underlying Truth, just as when the first principle of conduct is known and apprehended, all the subsidiary actions will flow as natural corollaries and form a consistent and coherent whole, each standing in its proper place and relation. And no passing gust of emotion or passion will be able to carry us off our feet, but will be judged and appraised and tested by the touchstone of the First principle. Just as to a man who has lost his

bearings of directions, all paths and by-ways appear a confused jumble, unrelated to one another, but when again he has fixed his bearings they form a coherent and well-mapped-out plan of directions, so, all the forms of the relative existence will remain but they will be strengthened by the apprehension of the unit existence behind, as the particular is known only when it is referred to the Universal and General. Therefore the Vedanta does not destroy the relative world of existence, it only explains it by referring it to the primal and ultimate substance, the Brahman. It does not destroy our personality or individuality but explains it by referring to the Unit impersonal principle of which all personalities are different moulds, and in which they are all one, so that they are suffused with a new direction, an added significance; instead of warring, separate, individualities, we become harmonious units of a homogeneous whole. Without the Unity behind, the diversity of forms, cannot remain. If they remain, they will remain as separate, independent entities and will be the cause of delusion and ignorance to us; for whichever object or person we approach except as Brahman or a form of Brahman at once throws a delusion over us, hurts us, and takes us into bondage. "Him the Brahman conquers who thinks the Brahman to be separate from the Brahman, him the Kshatriya conquers who thinks the Kshatriya separate from the Brahman, all beings conquer him who thinks all beings separate from Brahman." But if the apprehension of the forms does not bar from my view the knowledge of the generalised unity, if the knowledge of the jar, or pot does not hide from me the knowledge of the underlying clay behind, then these visions of manifold objects, which the sensible world presents

me with, will never cause any delusion to me, will never cause any aversion or attachment to me. For what cause aversion or attachment? It is through the knowledge that things are separate from me, that I am repelled or infatuated by them. But can I have repulsion for myself, can I have infatuation for myself? But when the same Brahman is apprehended as running through the whole series of its manifestations, nothing is thought to have any separate existence from it, then we are said to be established in knowledge. Such a man is invincible and unvanquishable. Nothing has power to cast any shadow of delusion over him, he will pass through the seventh hell unscathed.

In the depths of misery, in the highest elation of prosperity, he is same sighted and even-balanced, because he perceives the Soul first, last and always. It is the Soul, the Brahman first, which becomes coloured by the Maya of good or evil, happiness or misery. All garbs or forms in which the objects of the world masquerade and appear before us as different entities frightening or alluring us, their masks will be torn, their real nature having been known, their basal substance apprehended; for all the powerful spell with which they work on us arises from our regarding them as different from the underlying oneness of the Brahman.

To such a one, all going and coming is meaningless. Where can he go? Where is the place which the Brahman has not already filled? So long as one says here the Lord exists, and here not, he has missed the basal truth, his delusion has not vanished, he is talking like one yet overpowered by sleep. But when in all objects and actions, the same Brahman is apprehended, and when this apprehension has become so powerful as to have taken

complete possession of him, and has grown in such volume and strength as almost to obliterate all distinctions and separateness so that the iron bounds which separated objects previously have been attenuated to thin filmy partitions, and the unit ocean of existence is seen as embracing everything in its sweep, it is then that one is established in knowledge. To him, "here and hereafter" are meaningless jargon, for he is living, moving and has his being in the Truth always and forever, for he finds the same Brahman present everywhere as in the lowest hell as in the highest heaven. One who has reached such a pinnacle of knowledge, the Sruti says, at the time of his body falling, his *prana* does not travel to any *loka* (sphere of existence) however high and spiritual, as in the case of other worshippers of limited aspects of Brahman but his *upadhis*, (his physical and mental adjuncts) fall off and his spirit merges in the Universal Spirit, in which he had ever been living. "न तस्य प्राणा उत्क्रामन्ति, इहैव सम-विलीयन्ते ।" He is not a piecemeal worshipper of a Khandha (broken) aspect of Brahman, but he worships God in spirit and in truth. The limited is material, the spirit alone is infinite and his worship is worshipping the Infinite as infinite. His wide sweep embraces all spheres of existences from the lowest hell to the seventh heaven, all order of beings, all ranges of time and space and all kinds of works, for he finds them all one in the Brahman, the nearest of the near, his own soul. To see, move and live in this Truth, here, even now, without waiting for a future existence is according to the Vedanta, the highest destiny of man.



EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(CXXXVII—concluded)

I am really struck with wonder to see—the women here. How gracious the Divine Mother is on them! Most wonderful women, these! They are about to corner the men, who have been nearly worsted in this competition. It is all through Thy grace, O Mother! * * I shall not rest till I root out this distinction of sex. Is there any sex-distinction in the Atman? Out with the differentiation between man and woman—all is Atman! Give up the identification with the body, and stand up! Say, “अस्ति, अस्ति” “Everything is!”—cherish positive thoughts. By dwelling too much upon “नास्ति, नास्ति”—“It is not! It is not!” (negativism), the whole country is going to ruin! “सोऽहं, सोऽहं, शिवोऽहं”—“I am He! I am He! I am Shiva!” What a botheration! In every soul is infinite strength; and should you turn yourselves into cats and dogs by harbouring negative thoughts? Who dares to preach negativism? Whom do you call weak and powerless? “शिवोऽहं, शिवोऽहं”—“I am Shiva! I am Shiva!” I feel as if a thunderbolt strikes me on the head when I hear people dwell on negative thoughts. That sort of self-depreciating attitude is another name for disease—do you call that humility? It is vanity in disguise! “न लिङ्गं धर्मकारणं, समता सर्वभूतेषु एतन्मुक्त्यन्व लक्षणम्”—“The external badge does not confer spirituality. It is same sightedness to all beings which is the test of a liberated soul.” “अस्ति अस्ति, सोऽहं सोऽहं, चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहं”—“I am He!” “I am Shiva, of the essence of Knowledge and Bliss!” “निर्गच्छति जगज्जालात्पिञ्जरादिव केशरी”—“He frees himself from the meshes of this world as a lion from its cage!” “नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः”—“This Atman is not accessible to the weak.” * * Hurl yourselves on the world like an avalanche—let the world crack in twain under

your weight! Hara! Hara! Mahadeva! “उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्”—“One must save the self by his own self—by personal prowess.”

* * Will such a day come when this life will go for the sake of other's good? The world is not a child's play,—and great men are those who build highways for others with their heart's blood. This has been taking place through eternity, that one builds a bridge by laying down his own body and thousands of others cross the river through its help. “एवमस्तु, एवमस्तु, शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहं”—“Be it so! Be it so! I am Shiva! I am Shiva!” * *

It is a welcome news that Madras is in a stir.

Were you not going to start a paper or something of that sort, what about that? We must mix with all, and alienate none. All the powers of good against all the powers of evil—this is what we want. Do not insist upon everybody's believing in our Guru. * * You shall have to edit a magazine, half Bengali and half Hindi—and, if possible, another in English. * * It won't do to be roaming aimlessly. Wherever you go, you must start a permanent preaching centre. Then only will people begin to change. I am writing a book. As soon as it is finished, I run for home! * * Always remember that Sri Ramakrishna came for the good of the world—not for name or fame. *Spread only what he came to teach. Never mind for his name—it will spread of itself.* Directly you insist on everybody's accepting your Guru, you will be creating a sect, and everything will come to the ground,—so beware! Have a kind word for all—it spoils work to show temper. Let people say whatever they like, stick to your own convictions, and rest assured, the world will be at your feet. They say, ‘Have faith in this fellow or that fellow,’

but I say, 'Have faith in yourself first,' that's the way. Have faith in yourself—all power is in you,—be conscious and bring it out. Say, 'I can do everything.' "Even the poison of a snake is powerless if you can firmly deny it." Beware! No saying 'nay,' No negative thoughts! Say, 'Yea, yea,' 'सोऽहं, सोऽहं'—'I am He! I am He!'

किन्नाम रोदधि सत्यं स्वयि सर्वशक्तिः

आमन्त्रयस्व भगवन् भगदं स्वरूपम् ।

ब्रह्मोदयमेतदखिलं तव पादमूले

आत्मैव हि प्रभवते न जडः कदाचित् ॥

"What makes you weep, my friend? In you is all power. Summon up your all powerful nature, O mighty one, and this whole universe will lie at your feet. It is the Self alone that predominates, and not matter."

To work with undaunted energy! What fear! Who is powerful enough to thwart you! कुर्मस्तारकचर्यं चिमुवनभूत्पादयामः बलात् किं भी न विजानस्यस्मान्, रामकृष्णादासा वयस्—We shall crush the stars to atoms, and unhinge the universe. Don't you know who we are? We are the servants of Sri Ramakrishna. Fear! Whom to fear, forsooth!

लीलाः स्म दीनाः सकलस्याः जल्पन्ति मूढा जनाः

नारिस्तिक्यन्तिवदन्तु अहह देहात्मवादातुराः ।

प्राप्ताः स्म वीरा गतभया अमये प्रतिष्ठां यदा

आस्तिव्यन्तिवदन्तु चिनुमः रामकृष्णादासा वयस् ॥

पीत्वा पीत्वा परमममृतं वीतसंसाररागाः

हित्वा हित्वा सकलकलहप्रापिनीं स्वार्थसिद्धिं ।

ध्यात्वा ध्यात्वा गुरुवरपदे सर्वकल्याणरूपं

नत्वा नत्वा सकलभूवनम् पातुमामन्त्रयामः ॥

प्राप्तं यै त्वनादिनिधनं वेदोदाधिं मयित्वा

दत्तं वयस् प्रकरणे हरिहरब्रह्मादिदेवैर्बलं ।

पूर्वं यत्तु प्राणसरीभौमनारायणानां

रामकृष्णस्तनुं धत्ते तत्पूज्यात्रमिदं भोः ॥

—"It is these foolish people who identify themselves with their bodies, and piteously cry 'we are weak, we are low.' All this is atheism. Now that we have attained the state beyond fear, we shall have no more fear and become heroes. This indeed is theism which we will choose, the servants of Sri Ramakrishna.

"Giving up the attachment for the world and drinking constantly the supreme nectar of immortality, for ever discarding that self-seeking spirit which is the mother of all dissension, and ever meditating on the blessed feet of our Guru which is the embodiment of all well-being, with repeated salutations we invite the whole world to participate in drinking the nectar.

"That nectar which has been obtained by churning the infinite ocean of the Vedas, into which Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and the other gods have poured their strength, which is charged with the life-essence of the Avatars—Gods (Incarnate on earth),—Sri Ramakrishna holds that nectar in his person, in its fullest measure!"

We must work among the English-educated young men. "त्यागेनैकेन अमृतत्वमानुः"—"Through renunciation alone they attained immortality." Renunciation!—Renunciation!— you must preach this above everything else. There will be no spiritual strength unless one renounces the world. * *

Why are — suffering so much? It is owing to their negative, their self-abasing spirit. Tell them to brush aside their illness by mental strength and in an hour it will disappear! I the Atman smitten by disease? Off with it! Tell them to meditate for an hour at stretch, "I am the Atman, how can I be affected by disease!"—and everything will vanish. Think all of you that you are the infinitely powerful Atman, and see what strength comes out. * * Self-deprecating! What is it for! I am the child of the infinite, the all-powerful Divine Mother. What means disease, or fear, or want, to me? Stamp out the negative spirit as if it were a pestilence, and it will conduce to your welfare in every way. No negative, all positive, affirmative. I am, God is, everything is in me. I *will* manifest health, purity, knowledge, whatever I want. Well, these foreign people could grasp my teachings and you are suffering from illness

owing to your negative spirit! Who says you are ill—what is disease to you? Brush it aside! * * * “वीर्यमसि वीर्यं, बलमसि बलं, ओजोऽसि ओजो, सहोऽसि सहो मयि धेहि”—“Thou art Energy, impart energy unto me. Thou art Strength, impart strength unto me. Thou art Spirituality, impart spirituality unto me. Thou art Fortitude, impart fortitude unto me!” The ceremony of steadying one's seat (*āsana-pratisthā*) that you perform everyday when you sit down to worship the Lord—“आत्मानमाच्छिद्रं भावयेत्”

—“One must think of himself as strong and invulnerable” and so forth—what does it all mean? Say, “Everything is in me and I can manifest it at will.” Repeat to yourself that such and such are Atman, that they are infinite, and how can they have any disease? Repeat this an hour or so, on a few successive days, and all disease and trouble will vanish into nought.

Yours ever,
Vivekananda.

STORIES OF SAINTS.

I.

THE true saintly character is a priceless possession. It is as soft as it is strong. The sight of misery and suffering falling upon people moves it to an overflow of tender passion, yet it is so strong on occasions that a thousand sledge-hammer blows of adversity leave it unaffected.

A Sadhu was once bathing in the Ganges. The waters of the river having risen in high floods owing to heavy rains falling in the rainy monsoon, the waves were carrying away a scorpion which had accidentally slipped into the current. Seeing the helpless condition of the scorpion, fearing that it might lose its life, the Sadhu who was bathing, was moved to pity and descending into the waters, rescued it and helped it to the land. While he was rescuing it, the scorpion stung him sharply on the hand. Pained by the vicious bite of the creature the Sadhu patiently suffered and hastened to finish the bath, when again he found the scorpion had fallen into the waters, being carried away by the waves. Moved to instant compassion, despite the sharp pain on the hand, the Sadhu descended into the waters, and brought it to the land, when he was again viciously stung by the animal. When it had happened again and again, the thought arose in his mind, that I

should not save it another time, as the excruciating pain of its successive stings is giving me death-agonies. At once his *viveka* (discrimination) was awakened, and began to reproach him with these words, “Your action in declining to save does not benefit thee. It is not worthy of your Sadhu nature. Learn from the scorpion and take a lesson from his actions. You helped him time and again, you saved his life, still he did not give up his vicious nature, but in return for your services he stung you repeatedly according to his own low and vile nature; how can you then, O Sadhu, give up your own noble nature as a Sadhu and refuse to render help and succour to one in distress, simply because he is acting wickedly propelled by his own wicked nature. In spite of hundred faults and acts of ingratitude and harm, cease not from helping and serving others.

II.

The great Persian Sufi saint Bayezid once in the dead of night coming out of his room, found the whole town steeped in silence, and no stir or human movement about but all hushed in the deep silence of the night and the full moon was flooding the whole place about with its silver rays and the stars keeping their silent vigils in the sky. In that hushed silence of the night he set out

from his home and enjoying the surpassing beauty of nature around, he silently made his way across the open field to the other side of forests for passing the night in meditations and prayer and thoughts of the Lord. Then the supreme indifference of mankind in general who were all wasting such a heavenly hour of calm, peace and beauty in mere animal sleep and not turning their thoughts to God arose in his mind and pained by the thought he inwardly spoke, "O Lord, in the holy shrine of your Presence, there is such a scarcity of real lovers of God, that few attend it in such an hour of enchantment and surpassing beauty. In such a heavenly moonlit night of peace,

holiness and joy, none turn their thoughts to Thee, Thy praise, worship and contemplation of thy glory." Then the *akashbani* (heavenly voice) was heard "Not any and everybody, my son, can enter the holy shrine of My Thoughts; those who are rolling in luxurious beds, the idle, lazy, addicted to sleep, for them the doors of My Holy shrine are closed. But those who are vigilant, who have watched and prayed and been waiting for my Presence for long years, who have kept many a long vigil, one among a hundred of such enters the Inner sanctuary of my Presence."

SHANTI ASHRAMA DAYS.

(BY A WESTERN DISCIPLE.)

(Concluded from page 134)

W HETHER and objective obstacles were encountered in the meditation cabin. During the preliminary readings my attention was distracted by swarms of all breeds of flies, gnats and stinging insects. Occasionally a noisy wasp would become dangerously friendly, encircling the room at lightning speed, drawing nearer and nearer to my face with each revolution. At the conclusion of one such performance by a particularly large, rasping-voiced wasp, being unable to disturb my apparent composure, he alit at a safe distance as if to inspect me a moment. Then he made a vicious dart straight at my face, but veered off just as the impact seemed inevitable; then described innumerable revolutions around my head, passing directly in front of my eyes. I was determined not to show fear and nerved myself to take the sting which seemed sure to come sooner or later. I passed through the ordeal unharmed, however, and am now in a position to give advice on how to act when a wasp singles you out for his favours. But the worst was yet to come: When the reading was over and we settled ourselves for meditation, all the flies in the room took advantage of my helplessness and disported themselves

without mercy on the sensitive portions of my face. It was intolerable. I stole a surreptitious glance at G. to see how he was making out under the circumstances. He did not seem to be as interesting to the flies as I. I noticed, however, that a few flies were on his face, but apparently he knew nothing about it for there was not the slightest twitching of his face to indicate that anything disturbed him. I felt ashamed of my susceptibility to such trifles, and set to work to play the stoic. The effort terminated as other attempts along that line: I simply could not stand the internal irritation with composure. In the long run, however, there were some valuable moments.

Considerable time was devoted to exploring the Ashrama, ferreting out its secret places and locating its boundaries. In these silent walks I approached the Ashrama's solitude as a lover his beloved. Pleasant and profitable hours were spent in this way. The Santa Ysabele creek-bad had a peculiar fascination for me. During the winter months a surging torrent, its dry and rocky course was now bleaching in a tropic heat, the home of snakes and darting lizards. The breath of the desert was there. The shadiest places on the

Ashrama were along its bank for it was fringed with oaks, pines and willows, and was further shaded by precipitous hills; and here and there minerature valleys led away into inviting retreats.

The open-minded buoyancy of childhood attended me on those rambles. Thought was free, dissolving into dreams, long day-dreams, only to emerge into thought. Thought was the stuff dreams were made of; and dreams gave color and ideal consistency to thought. I dreamed of the great world I had left behind, a mere tradition lying far away beyond the mountains. I wondered why it was necessary to leave the city for the silence of the Ashrama, which, when one got used to it, held within its comparative silence as many obstacles to meditation as the city. I saw silence to be subjective, and hence that one could be as silent in the midst of the commonplace grind of life as on the Ashrama. Obstacles to meditation exist in the mind only. All ideas of religious theory and practice, however true, may be heard millions of times, but until one actually discovers them within his own definite experience they amount to a little more than froth of words. For this very reason Swami Vivekananda at all times insisted that the aspirant should strive to explore his own spiritual depth.

So for the time being the Ashrama suggested by contrast to my years of city life the idea of solitude. Undoubtedly the lapse of time, had I remained there long enough, would have set the mind's power of spiritual idealizing to weaving dreams of humble service amidst the care-strained faces of the city. The Ashrama's vistas of blue, hazy distances and near-by umbrageous nooks would become meaningless, in time, as compared to the surge of human life on a busy thoroughfare; and querulous jays, the song of the lark and the snappy yelp of the coyote would be no more significant than the rattling jolt of a garbage cart on cobbled streets. It is all a question of mood, or temperament. One order of life is, really, no better than another so long as the interior mind is awake to the presence of God. G. so often said, "For the life of me, I cannot see that one vocation is better than another. A Sanskrit pundit is no better than a hod-carrier if his thoughts are not inwardly on God." So the Ashrama life was significant only in so far as it

afforded stimuli which aroused the mind to thoughts of God and the spiritual life.

I wooed the myths only to see them dissolve in their golden sheen. Especially did I dream of the Hindu myths. I thought of the youthful flutist, Krishna, luring the love-inebriated Gopis from their dream of worldly duties to the dream of voluptuous ecstasy in the mad swirl of which consciousness rose to supersensuous heights. As I dreamed of the beautiful flute player, I felt the interior working of the *tanmātrās* of the myths, the myriad virtues of the gods,—such virtues as purity, sweetness, buoyancy etc. The flute became an instrument, not of sensuous melody luring the Gopis to their ruin, but of etherial strains whose vibrations were the waves of regeneration, the flood-tide bearing them into Sattvic consciousness. Then the rationalistic mind of me rose to the surface and questioned the practice of dances in the name of the Lord; that is, as a means to heighten spiritual enthusiasm. Then it pondered the significance of the myth and saw that the great truth illuminating the story was that the touch of the Lord at once liberates from sensuous attachment even while one is apparently submerged in a flood of seductive emotions. The liberating touchstone is the previously acquired love of the Lord, a love which has become the dominant passion of life; and pursuant to which all actions are entered into or, rather, permitted to continue along habitual lines as a safety-valve for excessive energies. In the *Līlās* spiritual spontaneity is the imperative condition if disaster is to be avoided, for he who sways but to melody puts himself in the position to receive the subtle elements of the melody, whatever they may happen to be. They enter into his mind functionings temporarily determining his conduct. Dancing upon advice is like "entering the silence" upon advice. One must find himself first, and he may be accounted lucky if he finds himself alive instead of clinging like a parasite to the outer edge of some precept.

To my mind at that time the Ashrama's wild notes had a peculiar charm, a quieting and soothing effect akin to that experienced when taut nerves relax to the sensuous caressing of favourite melodies. The song of the lark, the noisy jays, the hammering of wood-peckers, the soft whistling of quail in near-by canyons, the barking of coyotes

and the wind playing through the trees, shrieking about the meditation cabin, or furiously assaulting tents, causing the guy-ropes to strain in resistance as their slack was taken up first on one side and then on the other,—all these sounds were as so many pieces in a universal orchestra, arousing the mind to thoughts of that Presence in which they all unknowingly lived their day.

Not all moments, be it understood, were alert to thoughts of God. This surface and audible wild life was too sweet, too unreservedly hospitable, to be ignored for its own sake. Lying prone on the ground in the afternoon shade of some oak, listening to the blending of wild notes and weaving figures from the myriad leaves silhouetted against the sky, my body relaxed in the enjoyment of shameless, luxuriant loafing. But before the siesta was over I was usually reminded that "knee-deep in June" rest was not what I was in search of, but rather, consciousness which is soul-deep, poised in supersense.

One very warm afternoon while leisurely sipping our lemonade, we had a talk. I think I grew argumentative in my endeavour to place certain philosophical vagaries where they belonged. Now philosophy at its best derives its life, its vitality, its glory, from such as have passed beyond its scope. It trails ever in the wake of the illuminated consciousness. To the spiritual aspirant a philosophical temperament is a valuable asset, truly, if it be kept subordinate to the desire *to be spiritual*; for it acts as a sort of clearing process for the mind, removing thought-crudities and levelling old ruts thus giving balance to the emotional energies searching for God. But like other excellent proficiencies, when indulged for its own sake, it amounts to idleness or worse, as when playing with it in over-confidence, one becomes befuddled by his own caprice. A product of this state of mind aroused my active criticism. It was the idea that, for all we actually know, there may be progress beyond time and space. Whenever a conclusion so ably established as to admit of no shadow of doubt is suddenly set aside and the process of reasoning by which it was determined substituted in its place, as in the present instance, it is an infallible sign that the offending brain is in tragic need of a prolonged vacation. A change of

work might do, say ditch-digging, to give tone and sanity to the system.

Confidentially, I never was afflicted with that sort of thing; but for other ailments I found work beneficial. I chopped wood. I will not say how much I chopped,—there is no use in being too confidential,—but I can honestly say that I did chop wood, and right here on the Ashrama. Other work also did I do. I carried water from a spring hidden away in a secluded ravine about half a mile distant from the meditation cabin to irrigate some domestic shade trees which had been planted with the idea in view of beautifying the Ashrama. Also I followed G. one day assisting him in repairing stovepipes. He knew altogether too much about repairing stovepipes, or, for that matter, the repairing of anything else. He did not overlook a single detail. I know this positively for, I thought, on the completion of each step in the work that that surely was the end of the trouble. But not so. He just kept on and on until the imagination was brought into play to invent defects for I could by no means discern any. Of course I did not mind this in the least. I was ready for anything by way of diversion, and besides I was interested in the refinements of finish which a meditative mind could bestow on a common task. So having had experience I am in a position to recommend hard work for others.

It sometimes happens that one given to much talking talks to no purpose, and is promptly set right by his superiors. On one such occasion I was arrested in my flow of eloquence by the stern voice of G. which, however, was strangely at variance with the friendly gleam in his eyes. "Did it ever occur to you," he said, "that you came here to think, not to talk? This eternal effort to explain everything in the universe is a waste of time. You have read and studied and listened to lectures and talked and talked. You have had enough of that sort of thing. Now is the time to keep quiet, to think, to meditate. Try to get close to Mother. Try to live a quiet, deep, holy life."

Although we discussed *pro* and *con* the various philosophical theories, such as Advaita, Visishtādvaita, Karma, Reincarnation, Spiritualism etc., G. would invariably conclude by reminding me that religion did not consist in theorizing, however

ably, but putting into practice in our daily lives the spiritual truths which we really believe. We all know that much speculation leads to confusion to any mind. Take the Advaita for instance: It is a soul-stirring philosophy, but its realisation awaits the dissolving of all out-going mental life. The practical significance of the Advaita in daily life lies in its power to make people ethical and moral; and it gives to the individual a perspective on his own mind-functioning, enabling him to view his own personality with as much aloofness as he would another's. But many bright minds have gone wrong in playing with the Advaita as an abstraction. Again, consider the theory of Karma: However interesting and satisfying to the speculative mind, it really solves no vital problem. It ever coils away into the abysmal depths of mystery, leaving one guessing as to the next move. And so on all along the line. Mere theories lead one nowhere.

So during my Ashrama days G. drove the lesson home to me by precept, exhortation and constant example that the one supremely important thing to do was to take hold of religion at one's fingertips, training the mind and body to do all daily actions with alertness and precision, and to associate such actions with the spiritual truths which one firmly believes to be true. Different places on the Ashrama became associated with different sayings of G. On the first day after my arrival while we were at breakfast he struck the note which he carried with variations through all his talks during my stay. Speaking about the foundation of the spiritual life he said: "We must first be *men* before we can be *gods*. We must stand up and look the world in the face. We must have *character*. I do not believe in a spiritual life which is not represented by character in daily life. Anybody can talk. If we have duties to perform, or if we have unsatisfied desires, we should do them, satisfy our minds, our lower minds, and at the same time with our higher minds worship God. Let the lower mind have what is necessary to keep it quiet, and then exercise the higher mind in thinking about God. In this way we gradually rob the lower mind of its power, and are finally able to devote all the mind to God. So, if we would see God, we must be *men*. . . . Yes it is perfectly possible to find God, to become liberated from

future births, while working in the world. It is not *where* we are, nor *what* we are doing that hinders us, but *what* we are and *how* we are doing." Again later in the same day while at table he said: "While you are here try to get near to God. You can read other times, but now try to get close to Mother. Think of that one thing." In the evening our first walk to the gate was associated with, "Now try to *see* God. Put your whole time to that one end."

Many of his remarks contained food for years of thinking. Once in the meditation cabin after reading The Crest Jewel of Discrimination, he said, "First we are human, then we must be *men*, then aspire to God. First manhood, then aspiration, then final rest in God. We give ourselves to God and He gives us wisdom. He gives us Himself. Practicality was the key-note of all his talks. He sifted all ideas associated with the spiritual life, separating the sophistries which invariably cling to them from their real meaning. Speaking of the tendency of many persons to slight their duties as the result of their supposed zeal for meditation, he said: "That point is one very greatly misunderstood by those who think they want spirituality. They think that if they do not remember to do the necessary things, that it is a good sign they are thinking of God. It is nothing of the kind. It is a Tamasic condition. We go dreaming about thinking, of God a little and the rest of the mind goes to everything, does nothing. We should do the things we have to do and then there will be plenty of time to think of God, *plenty of time*. We should be manly and do our work ourselves; not leave it for others. We can meditate on God better for it. We should *know* what we are doing. We should keep alert and do what there is to do, thinking of God the while, and then meditate on God afterward."

Equality in relationships was another idea that received his scathing criticism. "Peace and helpfulness," he said, "never come from the idea of equality. It is a worldly idea that equality brings peace. Equality means, 'You are no better than I.' It may be said for decency that 'You are not less than I'; but what is meant is, 'I am as great as you.' For peace and happiness there must be a giver and a receiver, a superior and an inferior. One must be willing to serve and one

willing to be served. All are not equal and cannot be. It is a delusion to think so."

The most trivial events were the occasions for him to bring out some pointy idea. One afternoon while talking over our lemonade he got some seeds into his mouth and spitting them away remarked, "That is the way to do at all times,—throw away the useless and retain the useful. We should discriminate at all times."

Concerning all actions contemplated in the future he used to say "Mother knows." He never said "I will do so and so," but, rather, "Mother willing, I will do so and so." On being questioned as to this way of speaking he replied, "The sense of egotism and egoism separates us from the consciousness of Mother. Only when we do our duty fully can we say that Mother does it. When Mother's will is done *in us*, the Mother does it."

So amidst the tangy fragrance of nature the days passed in talking, reading and meditating on God. In all this the outstanding experience was

my association with G. It became clear to me that had I been there alone, little real meditating would have been done. The struggle to adjust myself to the consciousness of isolation would have taken up the larger portion of my energies. The mental balance given by congenial association was necessary. Fortunately for me, I realised the greatness of the contact, and I gave myself up to it with all the devotion of which my nature was capable. Again and again he would say, "Now when you go back to the city take the spirit of the Ashrama with you. Make your home an Ashrama by living a deep, sweet, holy life." So it came to pass that for a brief span of days I stood in relation to myself in the light of a great spiritual awakening; and I knew, even then as now, that the impetus received would abide with me, as the years slipped by.

At last dawned the day when the Ashrama gate opened for me to pass out to take up afresh the thread of the old life made new and vital by the elixir of an undying spiritual enthusiasm.

DEDICATORY STANZAS ON THE BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

स्वर्गीय श्रीमद् विवेकानन्दस्वामिनां पुण्यजन्मतिथौ निवेदनम् ।

(Read at the birthday anniversary at Bangalore.)

हित्वा स्वदेशं प्रियजन्मभूमिम्
यातो विवेकामरधाम वीर ! ।
शोकाग्निदग्धा तवदेशमाता
रोरुयते ह्येवमभरासहिष्णुः ॥१॥

अभूस्त्वमस्याः क्षणजन्मपुत्रः
त्वया विना साद्य बभूव दुःखा ।
प्रत्यूषमेघैः पिहितेऽहिमांशौ
क्षयेव देशं जडताधिचक्रे ॥२॥

स्वधर्मनिष्ठा परितः पलायिता
कर्मानुरक्तिर्नैव कुत्र लक्ष्यते ।
परार्पसेवा भ्रवणेन्द्रियालया
परानुवृत्तिः परमंहि पौरुषम् ॥३॥

1. Leaving your own country, the beloved place of your nativity, thou hast gone, O Hero, to the immortal abode of the Wise; your mother country is now weeping in bareavement unable to bear the heavy pain (of your loss).

2. Thou wert but a short-lived son of Thy mother; without thee, She has to-day become very destitute; like the sun's rays covered by early morning clouds, has Inertia like shadows overpowered the country.

3. Devotion to one's Dharma has fled all round; love of work and activity are not to be seen anywhere; service of others has been reduced to a mere sound residing in the ear, and slavish dependance on others is the highest manliness,

स्वाधीनचिन्ता विलयं प्रयाता
उच्छिष्टवृत्तिर्हि जनः समग्रः ।
भोगार्थमुत्तकाः हितबुद्धिहीनाः
श्रुधेव श्वानः पुरुषा भ्रमन्ति ॥४॥

दौर्गत्यमेतद्विखिलं निरीक्ष्य
मनस्विचित्तं व्यथते प्रकामम् ।
त्वज्जन्म पुण्येऽहनि तत्समेताः
मनस्विनस्त्वामसकृत् स्मरन्ति ॥५॥

त्वमेहि कर्मप्रवरात्र भारते
प्रबोधयेमाननुजानकर्मठान् ।
निगूढ वेदान्तरहस्यबोधने-
र्विमोचयेदं मृतकल्पभारतम् ॥६॥

यात्युन्नति भोगरतो न देशः
त्यागेन मुक्तिं लभते स नूनम् ।
देशात्मबोधच्युतहीनलोकै-
र्न कुत्रचित् कर्म महत् सुसाध्यम् ॥७॥

वेदोक्तमन्त्रैरिव ते निनादैः
सुपुप्तसिंहा इव लोकसिंहाः ।
निरस्य निद्रां पुरुषत्वहन्त्रीम्
नबोध्यमेनात्र कृतौ यतन्ताम् ॥८॥

तवाशिषः सन्तु शिरःसु वृष्टाः
भवन्तु देवाः सततं सहायाः ।
मनांसि नः सन्तु निरङ्कुशानि
कर्मप्रवाहाः प्रवहन्त्वजस्रम् ॥९॥

नवरविकरदीप्तो दृश्यते दिग्विभागः
दिशिदिशि मृदुवायुः पुष्पगन्धी प्रवाति ।
ललित मधुर गीतं गीयते पक्षिसङ्घैः
भवत भवत वीर-भ्रातरः कर्मशूराः ॥१०॥

4. Independent thinking has come to naught and all men are living on the cast-out thoughts of others; devoid of the sense of real well-being, and hankering for self-enjoyment, people are wandering about like hungry dogs.

5. Seeing all these miseries, it pains much the mind of the thoughtful; and so they, assembled in the holy day of thy nativity, remember thee again and again.

6. Come thou, supreme worker, to Bharata, and arouse the younger generation who are averse to work; and by the teachings of the deepest secrets of the Vedanta, rescue this deathlike Bhārata.

7. The country will not advance by addiction to enjoyment; but by renunciation surely will it attain salvation; for by vulgar men who are devoid of patriotism, no great work is easy of accomplishment anywhere.

8. By thy trumpet-call, like unto the sound of Vedic Mantrams, let all the lion-hearted men, like roused-up lions, cast off their sleep, the killer of manhood, and with rejuvenated energy strive for success in work.

9. May they blessings descend like rain upon the heads of all, may the gods be always helpful, may our minds be in peace without any trouble, may the current of work flow in a copious stream!

10. The quarters are seen radiant with the fresh rays of the sun, in all directions the soft breeze is blowing laden with the sweet fragrance of the flowers, the birds are singing sweet and melodious notes,—Be thou, be thou, O brothers, heroes of action.

VIVEKACHUDAMANI

(Continued from page 137.)

पञ्चीकृतेभ्यो भूतेभ्यः स्थूलेभ्यः पूर्वकर्मणा ।

समुत्पन्नमिदं स्थूलं भोगायतनमात्मनः ॥

अवस्था जागरस्तस्य स्थूलार्थानुभवोऽयतः ॥८८॥

88. This gross body is produced by one's past actions out of the gross elements subdividing and combining with the other four, and is the medium of experience for the soul. That is its waking state in which it perceives gross objects.

[Subdividing etc.—Panchikarana: see note on Sloka 74.]

बाह्येन्द्रियैः स्थूलपदार्थसेवां,

स्पर्शचन्दनस्पर्शादिविचित्ररूपाम् ।

करोति जीवः स्वयमेतदात्मना

तस्मात्प्रशस्तिर्वपुषोऽस्य जागरे ॥८९॥

89. Identifying itself with this form the individual soul, though separate, enjoys gross objects, such as garlands and sandal-paste etc., by means of the external organs. Hence this body has its fullest play in the waking state.

सर्वेऽपि बाह्यसंसारः पुरुषस्य यदाश्रयः ।

विद्धि देहमिदं स्थूलं गृहवद्गृहमेधिनः ॥९०॥

90. Know this gross body to be like a house to the householder, on which rests man's entire dealing with the external world.

स्थूलस्य सम्भवजरामरणाणि धर्माः

स्यौल्यादयो बहुविधाः शिशुताद्यवस्थाः ।

वर्णाश्रमादिनियमा बहुधाऽमयाः स्युः

पूजावमानबहुमानमुक्ता विशेषाः ॥९१॥

91. Birth, decay and death are the various characteristics of the gross body, as also stoutness etc.; childhood etc. are its

different conditions; it has got various restrictions regarding caste and order of life; it is subject to various diseases, and meets with different kinds of treatment, such as worship, insult and high honours.

Caste—Brāhmana &c. Order of life—Brahmacharya etc.]

बुद्धीन्द्रियाणि श्रवणं त्वगक्षि

घ्राणं च जिह्वा विषयावबोधनात् ।

वाक्पाणिपादा गुदमण्युपस्थः

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि प्रवणोऽन कर्मसु ॥९२॥

92. The ears, skin, eyes, nose and tongue are organs of knowledge, for they help us to cognise objects; the vocal organs, hands, legs etc. are organs of action, owing to their tendency for work.

निगद्यतेऽन्तःकरणं मनोधी-

रहङ्कृतिश्चित्तमिति स्ववृत्तिभिः ।

मनस्तु संकल्पविकल्पनादिभि-

र्बुद्धिः पदार्थाध्यवसायधर्मतः ॥९३॥

अत्राभिमानादहमित्यहङ्कृतिः ।

स्वार्थानुसन्धानगुणोऽन चित्तम् ॥९४॥

93—94. The inner organ (Antahkarana) is called Manas, Buddhi, Ego or Chitta, according to their respective functions: the Manas, from its considering the pros and cons of a thing; the Buddhi, from its property of determining the truth of objects; the Ego, from its identification with this body as one's own self; and the Chitta, from its function of seeking for pleasurable objects.

प्राणपानव्यानोदानसमाना भवत्यसौ प्राणः ।

स्वयमेव वृत्तिभेदाद्विकृतिभेदात्सुवर्णसज्जित-

दिवत् ॥९५॥

95. The same Prāna becomes Prāna, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna according to their diversity of functions and modifications, like gold and water etc.

[Like gold etc.—Just as the same gold is fashioned into various ornaments, and as water takes the form of foam, waves, etc.]

वागादि पञ्च श्रवणादि पञ्च
प्राणादि पञ्चाश्रमुत्तानि पञ्च ।

बुद्ध्याद्यविद्यापि च कामकर्मणी
पुरुषं सूक्ष्मशरीरमाहुः ॥६६॥

96. The five organs of action such as speech etc., the five organs of knowledge beginning with the ear, the group of five Prānas, Buddhi and the rest, together with Nescience, desire and action—these eight 'cities' make up what is called the subtle body.

[Nescience &c.—See note on Sloka 55.]

इदं शरीरं शृणु सूक्ष्मसंज्ञितं
लिङ्गं त्वपञ्चीकृतभूतसम्भवम् ।

सवासनं कर्मफलानुभावकं
स्वाज्ञानतोऽनादिरुपाधिरात्मनः ॥६७॥

97. Listen,—this subtle body, called also Linga body, is produced out of the elements before their subdividing and combining with each other, is possessed of desires and causes the soul to experience the fruits of its actions. It is a beginningless superimposition on the soul brought on by its own ignorance.

स्वप्नो भवत्यस्य विभक्त्यवस्था
स्वमात्रशेषेण विभाति यत्र ।
स्वप्ने तु बुद्धिः स्वयमेव जाग्रत्-
कालीननानाविधवासनाभिः ॥६८॥

कर्त्रादिभावं प्रतिपद्य राजते
यत्र स्वयं भाति ह्ययं परात्मा ।
धीमात्रकोपाधिरशेषसाक्षी
न लिप्यते तत्कृतकर्मक्षयैः ।

यस्मादसङ्गस्ततएव कर्मभि-

र्न लिप्यते किञ्चिदुपाधिना कृतैः ॥६९॥

98—99. Dream is a state of the soul distinct from the waking state, where it shines by itself. In dreams Buddhi, by itself, takes on the role of the agent and the like, owing to various desires of the waking state, while the supreme Atman shines in its own glory,—with Buddhi as its only superimposition, the witness of everything, and is not touched by the least work that the Buddhi does. As it is wholly unattached, it is not touched by any work that its superimpositions may perform.

[Buddhi—here stands for the Antahkarana—the "inner organ" or mind.

By itself—independently of the objective world.

Takes on the role &c.—The Atman is the one intelligent principle, and whatever Buddhi does it does borrowing the light of the Atman.]

सर्वव्यापृत्तिकरणं लिङ्गमिदं स्याच्चिदात्मनः पुंसः ।
वास्यादिकमिव तक्षणात्तेनैवात्मा भवत्यसङ्गोऽयम् ॥

100. This subtle body is the instrument for all activity of the Atman, who is Knowledge Absolute, like the adze and other tools of a carpenter. Therefore this Atman is perfectly unattached.

अन्धत्वमन्दत्वपटुत्वधर्माः
सौगुण्यवैगुण्यवशादि चक्षुषः ।
बाधिर्यमूकत्वमुखास्तथैव

श्रोत्रादिधर्मा न तु वेत्तुरात्मनः ॥१०१॥

101. Blindness, weakness, and sharpness are conditions of the eye, due to its fitness or defectiveness merely; so are deafness and dumbness etc. of the ear and so forth,—but never of the Atman, the Knower.

(To be continued.)

SELF-SURRENDER.

(SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA.)

SELF-SURRENDER is a calm and sweet resignation to God—a blissful state which can be attained through long, long years of spiritual practices. Our egoism to which we cling most tenaciously is the root of all evil in our transmigratory existence and is also the cause of our bondage to this world. The more the ego predominates in us, the farther we are away from God, the greater our sufferings and tribulations in this world. The *summum bonum* of life is therefore to dedicate our ego to God. This state of self-surrender is compared to a sort of sweet repose which we enjoy after a period of hard and strenuous physical labour. It is indeed a blissful state, having no idea of 'me and mine' and all our thoughts and energies flow Godwards, we obey His will and live in Samsara quite free as a bird flying about in the open expanse of the sky.

Is it possible to resign our ego to God and work without the idea of Aham ('I-ness') or having no thought of the doer? To this question we reply that we can do a greater amount of work when we have no selfish ends in view and in a more perfect way than we can ordinarily work in our every-day life with the idea of egoism. Our scriptures aim at self-abnegation and teach us how by following various means and methods prescribed by them we can attain to this state of liberation. The Lord Sri Krishna instructs his beloved disciple Arjuna in the Gita as to how he should conduct himself in the battle-field. Here we find the secret of work taught to Arjuna. The work when done with a selfish object in view, says the Lord, and with the idea of a doer binds a man and the results accruing thereby must necessarily produce effects on him. He therefore cautions Arjuna not to have an eye on the results of the work he performs and exhorts him to fight as a true Kshatriya, being an instrument in His hands and surrendering his ego to Him. The Lord goes on to say that the *gunas* of Prakriti perform all actions but the Atman of man deluded by the idea of egoism, wilfully takes the

fetters round the feet by accepting the idea of 'I am the doer.' Arjuna could not grasp the subtle philosophy of work but Sri Krishna led him step by step and pointed out that he would not clearly understand this philosophy until he resigned himself to Him. Arjuna found it next to an impossibility to follow this teaching and so the Lord took compassion on him, lifted the veil from the face of the Future and showed him His Universal Form. The sight of this made him realise that his kinsmen with whom he had hesitated to fight on the eve of the battle were all lying dead in that all-pervading Form. Thus, his eyes were opened and he was impressed with the idea that Prakriti in its own working-out will compass its ends, that he also as a player of Prakriti must play his part as an instrument in His hands. Arjuna desisted from fighting because of his attachment for this 'me and mine,' his own personal likes and dislikes deterred him from treading the path which duty and righteousness clearly pointed out. The thought of sin in killing his kinsmen in battle now altogether left him and after dedicating his self to the Lord, he was able to fight as a true Kshatriya. The secret of Karma is therefore to dedicate our 'self' to God and work as an instrument in His hands for righteous ends leaving its fruit to Him. Then to whatever crosses and difficulties our duty may take us we shall be able to tread the path with unflinching steps.

Thus by giving up our 'self' to God, there is an infinite expansion of the bounds of our life, and we no more limit ourselves to the narrow interests of 'me and mine.' If the pleasure of attachment to the selfish 'me and mine' is so much that we do not desire to part with it, then think of the bliss of the infinite life, when this circle of 'me and mine' expands and takes in wide spaces of life and interests. Coming out of narrow grooves with little interests and desires, we begin to live the life of the All. It is then that we begin to feel for others and play a real part in the world and help the cause of suffering humanity, but so long as

we have the idea of 'me and mine' implanted in us we are no better than ordinary mortals bound by the pairs of opposites, viz. pleasure and pain, happiness and misery and the trivial interest of life absorbing and obsessing our whole mental field.

The great prophets and saviours of the world who have trampled this self under foot, how they impress us with their largeness of vision, their wide mental horizon! Their sense of a Divine order in things, their wide out-look, their transcendental emotion and striving for Ideals, everything about them is on a large and grand scale; all these irradiate from them increasing their strength and stature; they seem to us like gigantic Figures, "their heads striking the skies, their shadows covering the earth." Think of Lord Buddha whose heart was as broad as the infinite ocean. Not born with 'self' he made the sufferings of the world his own and strove to find a way out. He had not the least idea of 'me and mine' in him. Sri Ramanujacharya who was as great a soul as Buddha, when initiated by his Guru, was particularly asked not to reveal the sacred *mantram* he had received from him and that it should be kept in strict confidence. But Sri Ramanujacharya knew the efficacy of the *mantram*, and felt an indomitable passion to give it to the ignorant people merged in ignorance in order that they might be saved. His heart bled as it were for the miserable condition of his brethren. Mounting the tower of Conjeeveram he exclaimed, "Come, all ye children of my Beloved, I shall deliver you from the miseries of the world. Take this sacred *mantram*, repeat it and ye shall be saved." When his Guru came to know that he had disobeyed him by giving out the *mantram*, he became angry with him and said, "Thou art doomed for ever, thou hast dared to disobey me, thy Guru, and as a result thou shall live for ever in hell." Sri Ramanuja imploring his pardon said, "My beloved Guru, true it is that I have disobeyed you and that I am doomed for ever. I am ever ready to go to hell and be there till the end of the creation, but I shall have the consolation that I have saved so many thousands of ignorant souls at the sacrifice of my own insignificant single self." Just think of the unbounded love of this great Acharya of Southern India towards these ignorant souls. We instinctively bow in reverence before

these giants among men who bore a world's woe on their shoulders and who made the whole world their own and we seem pygmies in comparison, through our obsession with the little interests of our little lives. Is it be possible to think of others much less to love them more, when we are centred in ourselves? No, this expansion of heart is possible only when we are rid of the idea of egoism. As instruments in His hands, when we are able to do this we shall be true workers and attain to the state of liberation in our life. This is the ideal of the Karma Yogins.

Now we shall see how the devotees resign themselves to the Lord and live in Him and work as instruments in His hands. They approach Him by establishing some relationship with Him such as father or mother or master etc. and worship Him in that light with fervent devotion. They offer what they possess viz. wealth, property, nay their own body and mind unto their beloved and remain satisfied with pure devotion only. When the Love for God begins to grow in intensity everything is covered over by it, all things are seen as the Beloved's and our love flows to all without any distinction, or hindrance. When this all-devouring love of God dawns on the human heart, he is raised far above the human level. In this flood-tide, the personality of the devotee is drowned, and pain and pleasure, good and evil, happiness and misery are the same to him, as all 'the dual throng' come from the Beloved. They never look to their physical comforts and sacrifice everything for Him. This absolute reliance of the devotees is really wonderful. All the pains and pleasures, sorrows and miseries of life are annulled by it. Pavhari Baba, the great saint of Ghazipur, we are told, was once bitten by a cobra and subsequently shut himself up in his cell for three days; when he came out, his disciples asked him and he replied, 'My children, a messenger from the Beloved came.' This perfect reliance on God is the effacement of the idea of 'me and mine' and is the outcome of complete resignation to God. Hence we have read of Sri Ramakrishna praying to the Divine Mother, 'Oh Mother, I am Thy machine and thou art one working the machine, I am Thy chariot, Thou art my charioteer, I am Thy room, Thou art my tenant etc.' He dedicated his ego to Mother and lived as a five-year old

child of Her with no attachment for things of the world. Love is reciprocal. The Lord loves His devotees and He is attracted by them through their devotion just as a piece of iron is attracted by a magnet. He comes nearer and nearer and manifests Himself to them and they completely resign themselves to Him and attain perfection. So we find that self-surrender is also the ideal of the devotees. This is the end of their spiritual Sadhana, when they are able to give themselves up to God, along with what they call 'me and mine.' Nothing will be able to produce a reaction on them and make them become identified with them, verily the bonds of the world will then be cut. In whatever circumstances or place the devotee is placed, his heart is given to the Lord and the compass of his mind is true to God and he does not know what it is to complain of pain and misery; merged in the bliss of the Lord and they pass by unheeded. His hand works, but his mind is given to the Lord. Such work without any idea of egoism is fruitful blessing the doer, the deed, and the object of the work.

We find also the Jnanins striving to merge their apparent self in the Universal Self, the Atman, through the process of discrimination. They look upon this phenomenal world of manifoldness as Maya and postulate the existence of one Reality behind it and in order to realise this Reality they make a search after it. To find out the unity underlying all this variety of forms is the goal of their lives. Their process of discovering the one Reality is rather difficult, but striving hard and by denying everything, viz. the world, body, mind, ego, they realise the all-blissful Atman and become one with it. Thus the Jnanins also surrender their ego to attain to perfection.

So we find that this egoism binds us fast to the world and until we are freed from its clutches, we cannot attain to the state of perfection. The idea of 'me and mine' which is born of this egoism makes us selfish, self-centred and narrow-minded, and is the cause of our sufferings in this world and the rooting out of this ego is the end of all Sadhana. Hence, by surrendering our ego and 'me and mine' to the blissful Lord, we attain to the sumum bonum of life.

A NOTICE.

Sir John Woodroffe's book on Shakti and Shakta is on our table and has given us interesting reading, because of its easy presentment of the theory and practice of Shakti Sadhana.

We venture however to offer some comments on one or two points of the writer's argument. When he says that the Shakti-vada of the Tantras is an original conception and differs from the

Maya of Vedanta in that the latter is unconscious in Vedanta whereas the Shakti of the Tantras is a conscious principle, we demur. Maya in Vedanta, as the principle of the manifold ignorance is certainly *Jada* (unconscious). But Maya in the sense of Brahman-shakti or Chitshakti is not cognised by Sankara as an unconscious principle (the difference of Jada and Chaitanya, it is to be remembered, is one of degree). When the Brahman is apprehended before its degeneration into duality of ignorance by Avidya, when it is seen as underlying all the motions and changes of phenomenal existence, it is called Brahma-Shakti. For no object can have any existence apart from Brahman which is involved in all its modifications. It is Brahman in movement as it were; not that it has really moved, otherwise that will really break the changelessness of the Brahman, but when it is seen through the veil of movement it is conceived as Shakti. It is the conscious principle; it is one and non-different from Brahman, as the Brahman is conceived as being involved in all its modifications. It is this Brahman, the Brahman in movement as it were, as underlying the moving phenomenal existence, which the Tantras have developed into Adyashakti, or Mahashakti. In that it is one and non-different from Brahman, the difference being caused by one of view-points. But Maya, the principle of the ignorance of manifoldness, which has brought about the play of manifoldness, *by covering the knowledge of the Brahman*, by making us forget our real Swarupa, that Maya is Anadyavidya, that is Jada, the Nescience. So we must distinguish between the Maya, the principle of Nescience of the Vedanta, and the Brahman and its Shakti which are one and non-different which the Tantras have developed later. In one of Sri Ramakrishna's sayings this point is brought out nicely. He says, "Brahman and Shakti are *aveda*, (non-different); as Fire and its heat, the serpent and its tortuous motion. If I have to think of the one, I have to think of the other. The Lord when I look upon Him as *achala atala*, (unchangeable immovable) I call Him Brahman, when I conceive of Him as creating, manifesting and dissolving the universe, I call Him Adyashakti, Mahamaya." He who is *achala*, has *chala* also, change can only be thought of by an unchanging something; an unchanging something can only be thought as underlying change, so long, that is to say, as we have to think at all. But if it is beyond everything so that it cannot be brought within the purview of any Shastra or Tantra it is Dwaita-advaita-vivarjitam and beyond both change and changelessness. So what the Tantras have developed into Shakti is not the counterpart of the Maya, the principle of Avidya and manifoldness of Brahman, but the Brahma-Shakti, which is non-different from Brahman—the Chit-shakti, conceived as underlying all phenomena. There are

passages in Sankara's writing, in which also he looks upon Brahman as underlying all moving phenomena and being one and non-different from Brahman, the changeless (i.e. it suffers no change or degeneration thereby, it is conscious), the difference being only one of standpoints.

“कार्यमपि जगत् त्रिषु कालेषु सत्यं न व्यभिचरति, एकं च पुनः सत्यं ।” सदास्पदं हि सर्वं सर्वत्र सद्बुद्धिः, अनुगमात् (Gita Bhashya 10-18.)—अग्निवाद्यव्यादिरूपेण स्वेनैव विभक्तः न विराट्स्वरूपोपमर्देन (Brihad-Up. Bhashya 1.2.3.) We see no difference between this conception of Brahman being involved unimpaired in all its modifications, yet without स्वरूपोपमर्द (losing its real nature viz. consciousness) and the conscious principle of Shakti later developed by Tantras. In another place Sankara expressly states by an example. न च विशेषऽदर्शनमात्रेण ब्रह्मव्यत्यं भवति । न हि देवदत्तः संकोचितहस्तपादः प्रसारितहस्तपादश्च विशेषेण दृश्यमानोऽपि ब्रह्मव्यत्यं गच्छति त एवेति प्रत्यभिज्ञानात् ।— (Ved Bhash 2-1-18). Here Sankara expressly states the non-difference of Brahman and Brahman being thought of as being above all change and as underlying all changes. But of course from the transcendental standpoint, even Shakti is a degeneration. Of that alone, Sankara does not say. Then it is neither Brahman nor Maya nor anything: it is Neti, Neti, Atma, Dvaita-advaita-vivarjitam, beyond change and changelessness.

What is the conception of Maya in Sankara's philosophy? “Before creation, as with quelled modification, without any vibration, but with slightly aroused leaning towards the creation, the Sat or Brahman exists.” So Maya is the अनुत्थीन state of Brahman, facing towards creation, as it were. This is Maya. Then, by subsequent modifications all the manifold world has come out. So we see, according to Sankara Maya is nothing but the Shakti of Brahma and the relation of Maya and Brahma is also said to be by Ratnaprava-tikakar as तादात्म्य-संबन्धः, relation of non-difference. So Maya according to Sankara is but the Shakti of Brahman, as the power of Maya is derived from Brahman it is an intelligent power as Sankara expressly states in his Gita-Bhashya उत्तमः पुरुषः स्वकीयया चैतन्यय-बलशक्त्या आविशय विभक्तिः । (Gita-Bhashya 15-7.) “The *Uttama-purusha* or Paramatma by His own intelligent power is supporting the universe.” The difference of Maya as Brahma-shakti, and of Maya as the principle of Nescience seems to us a clear difference in Sankara's philosophy. In the former the principle of becoming is looked at from above as Mayadhisthita Brahmachaitanya, as intelligent principle, giving Pravritti to creation, yet remaining unaffected and unmodified through all change whereas Maya as principle of Nescience is looked at from below, from within creation as

subject to it, and hence *hiding the real nature of Brahman*, gives us the manifold forms of creation.

Even the Upanishads speak of the Brahman as being involved in all the modifications and yet not losing its nature or being affected by them. Exactly how the changeless Brahman persisted unchanged through all the changing phenomena without destroying its nature is a question which it is impossible for our intellect to grasp—this is Maya. Yet it is a fact all the same which Sankara has not shirked but acknowledged and so has explained Brahman as the cause of and underlying all phenomena, yet retaining its nature unchanged and unimpaired. It is this fact which the Tantras have emphasised and developed the conception of *Adya-shakti* working out all the phenomena of the universe. In Vedanta Bhashya on 2. 1. 27, in reply to an objection how the Brahman being the cause of all modifications and involved in them yet retains its absoluteness Sankara says that for this only Sruti is the authority as to how the Brahman remains unmodified through all modifications; for by Tarka (logic) such an apparently contradictory thing cannot be solved.

The unchanging unit Brahman is the only reality; you cannot conceive of change and admit the coexistence of change along with it. So when we are within the changing phenomenal world, the absolute, unchanging Brahman is non-existent for us, and when we are established in the Brahman, the changing world has vanished for us. A rope mistaken as a snake is mistaken wholly as a snake not as half-snake and half-rope—this is the statement of the transcendental position of Sankara. Yet for all purposes of explaining the world and creation, and so long as we are within the phenomenal existence, Brahman has to be posited as the underlying substratum behind all phenomenal objects and the underlying Shakti behind all phenomena of relative existence; otherwise It becomes a mere void and nullity to our ordinary experience. So Anandagiri in commentary on Gita Bhashya on 13. 13 says: The Brahman as devoid of all modification, beyond the cognition of mind and speech, is likely to be regarded as a nullity, Brahman is regarded as the underlying *sat* behind all phenomena, the cause of the movement of Indriyas etc. Sankara also says, “From the fact of the perception of phenomenal hearing, seeing, knowing, the existence of Brahman is assumed etc.” यदि हि नाम-रूपे न व्याक्रियते, तदाऽस्यात्मनो निरुपाधिकं रूपं प्रज्ञान-घनाख्या न प्रतिख्यायते । (Sank. Bhashya). If the Brahman had not manifested names and forms then the Upadhi-less, essence-of-knowledge aspect of Brahman could not be manifest to our mental cognition. For the changeless is only cognised as underlying charges, the Formless as running through forms. Also Brahman as Shakti has to be posited as underlying all the phenomena of relative

existence, otherwise there is the objection of *आकस्मिक प्रसंग* of Jagat, i. e. the world coming without any cause: So Sankara distinctly says in Vedanta Bhasya, *प्रतीयमानमपि चेदं जगत् शक्यवशेषमेव प्रतीयते इत्यत्र आकस्मिकप्रसंगान्* (Ved. Bhasya 1-3-30.) We contend it is this aspect of Brahman as underlying objects and phenomena, which is also acknowledged by Sankara as we have shown, that is developed by the Tantras later, so that the Infinite Being of Vedanta is translated into, Infinite Power of the Tantras. That this is the view taken even by Shakti worshippers who have reached to a high state of Shakti-sadhana is borne out by facts. Ramaprasad, the paragon of Shakti worshippers in its noblest form, in Bengal, realised the Shakti or Kali as one and non-different from Brahman. In one of his songs portraying his attitude towards Shakti and recording the deepest realisation of his spiritual life he says in unmistakable words, "Having known the essence of truth that Kali is Brahman, I have given up all duality of Dharma and Adharma."

The newness of Shaktivada of the Tantras is therefore, we contend, not one of conception, already existing in the Vedanta as we have seen, but in the bold original applications of that doctrine and in the rich symbolism of practical Sadhana embodying life-giving principles which it has developed as corollaries from that principle.

NEWS AND NOTES.

SWAMI Bodhananda, Lecturer and Teacher, Vedanta Society, New York City, America, has been holding classes on the Vedanta philosophy and lecturing every Sunday on the principles and practice of Vedanta. He also holds practical classes on the practical side of Yoga, the study of psychology, and the practice of meditation and concentration on Thursdays at 8 p. m.

At the request of the Sri Ramakrishna Society, Rangoon, Swami Sharvananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, paid his second visit to Rangoon on the 9th April last, the primary object of his visit being to awaken the dormant consciousness of the Rangoon public as to the necessity for a building for the Society. During his stay here the Swamiji held six discourses on the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. His first public lecture was on our Past and Present delivered on the 29th April. In the first week of May the Swamiji visited Pegu where he delivered a lecture on Our Present Needs; and on the result of his visit the Society gained a few more sympathisers who promised Rs. 725 towards the building fund. The public celebration of the 83rd birthday anniversary of

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva was observed in a grand style at Mr. S. R. Reddiar's new school buildings on Sunday the 19th May, when Sankirtans were sung, nearly 400 poor were sumptuously fed, a Harikatha discourse entitled Lakshmanasakthi was given by Brahma Sri C. Srinivasa Acharyar, and a splendid lecture on Sri Ramakrishna and the Ideal of Universal Religion was delivered by the Swamiji, followed by short speeches in Tamil, Hindi and Bengali. At the close of the day's programme was announced the munificent gift of Babu Sashi Bhushan Neogi, a local well-to-do merchant and philanthropist, who presented the Society with a building site valued Rs. 6000 and a cash donation of Rs. 10,000. On the next day the 20th the Swamiji laid the foundation-stone for the building on the above-mentioned site, after the due performance of Homa and other Vedic rites.

The Swamiji lectured in Hindi at the Burma Rice Merchants' Association at the request of the Bharat Mandal Sabha, and also in Bengali to a large Bengali audience at the Durga Temple on Sri Ramakrishna and His Sadhana. His lectures on the Evolution of Life in the local Theosophical Lodge on the 5th May, and on the Ideal of Life in the Bengali Social Club on the 26th May were highly illuminating. Renunciation and service, said the Swamiji, must be the foundation stones on which should be built the fabric of a true spiritual life. It is the fervent hope of the members that with the construction of a habitation for the Society and with the completion of the details of the affiliation to the present Institution assured by the Swamiji, a new and vigorous life will be instilled into the Society and that it will live to perpetuate and diffuse the noble and inspiring teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Deva among the various creeds and faiths in these lands of Farther India.

We regret to announce the passing away of Bhaskar Vishnu Phadake, a worker in the field of Marathi literature, who was much interested in the writings and work of Swami Vivekananda. For the purpose of popularising the writings and message of the revered Swami Vivekananda he alone bought, without any joint-ownership, the copyright for the Marathi translation of the Swami's writings (The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda and The Life of Swami Vivekananda, publications of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati) from the late Swami Prajnananda, President of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Lohaghat, in pursuance of which he had been bringing them out in parts. He had brought out 4 parts when his work was prematurely cut off by his sad and untimely end. May the Lord's blessings be on him for his labours in the Cause, and may his family find consolation in their bereavement!